

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A system for reducing accidental explosion hazard of an aircraft fuel tank having a head space, comprising

(a) fuel scrubbing means for removing oxygen dissolved in a liquid aircraft fuel, in which the fuel scrubbing means is adapted to remove an amount of the oxygen from the fuel effective to produce a low concentration of dissolved oxygen of the fuel, about 5 parts per million by weight, at which oxygen liberated from the fuel during flight produces an oxygen concentration of vapor in the head space not exceeding a preselected limit,

(b) head space inerting means for purging the head space with a substantially oxygen-free gas to provide an oxygen concentration of vapor in the head space of less than the preselected limit, and

(c) volatile organic compound removing means for separating substantially all volatile organic compound components present in a vapor produced by the fuel scrubbing means and the head space inerting means prior to emitting the vapor to ambient atmosphere, in which all of the fuel scrubbing means, head space inerting means and volatile organic compound removing means are positioned on ground at an airport.

Claim 2 (original) The system of claim 1 in which the fuel scrubbing means and the head space inerting means are adapted to reduce the oxygen concentration of the vapor to at most about 12 vol. %.

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Reply to Office Action of February 19, 2004

Claim 3 (currently amended) The system of claim 1 in which the fuel scrubbing means is adapted to produce a concentration of dissolved oxygen of at most about ~~5~~ 3 parts per million by weight.